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KARACH: Elevated Expressway Project Launched

KARACHI, Feb 9: President General Pervez Musharraf has said that Pakistan is moving forward on the path of progress and prosperity.

He was speaking at the ground breaking ceremony of the Karachi Elevated Expressway held at the Governor's House here on Friday. The expressway is being built to link National Highway and Jinnah Bridge.

The president described it a great project as the 24-kilometre elevated expressway would help ease traffic congestion and ensure safety during travel.

Pakistan is moving forward in every sphere – economic and development, social sector, health and education -- as well as political sector, and introducing sustainable democracy, empowerment of women and minorities, etc.

He noted that the country was making headway because the economy had been set right which led to the accelerated developmental activity.

Gen Musharraf pointed out that from 1988 to 1999, the development budget of the country was between Rs60 billion and Rs80 billion per annum which had now gone up to Rs415 billion.

“That is why, the government has been able to take up development projects in Sindh, Balochistan, NWFP and other parts of the country.”

The president said that the only threat the country faces was from terrorism, extremism and sectarianism and if we did not correct this situation, we would not be able to sustain the economic growth.

He said that Pakistan had a standing in the comity of nations, in the Islamic Ummah and in the world. “People seek our views and our support,” he added.

Gen Musharraf said: “Our standing in the comity of nations will not be there in case we do not eradicate intolerance, extremism and sectarianism from our society. The strategy which we are pursuing will enable us to tackle the problem of terrorism.”

Economic prosperity is gauged by the things such as the availability of energy, and Pakistan is suffering from electricity and gas shortage. This is a sign of development and we will take steps to meet this challenge. The other sign of development is traffic congestion. In Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad, roads are so broad but even in Islamabad, the traffic is chocked today and, therefore, flyovers, overhead bridges and underpasses are being constructed.

Gen Musharraf pointed out that some five years back, the production of cars in the country was about 35,000 while the figure had now gone up to 250,000. The production of motorcycles which was 85,000 at that time had also crossed the 800,000 mark, he added.

He said that this was the boom in the purchasing power of people who are buying more cars and motorcycles which, he pointed out, was also a sign of development.

The President said the projects under the Karachi Development Plan were started some four or

five years back in which the corporations of this city contributed while the federal, provincial and district governments also participated.

He also lauded the role of Sindh governor and chief minister for supporting all these projects. He also appreciated the energetic Nazim of Karachi Syed Mustafa Kamal.

In the context of the massive development, the president made mention of the mega projects like Northern Bypass, Lyari Expressway and the 100-MGD water supply project, as well as the construction of Quaid's mausoleum park, Bagh Ibne Qasim, Askari Park at Old Sabzi Mandi and the beautification along the beach.

He said the short- and mid-term steps were being taken by Karachi Electric Supply Corporation to improve electricity supply in the metropolis.

The president said that the Federal Minister for Ports and Shipping Babar Khan Ghauri was also doing a lot for the development of Karachi, and added that a bridge was being constructed up to Manora (Island). A number of projects were coming up for Karachi, he said.

Sindh Governor Dr Ishratul Ibad, Chief Minister Dr Arbab Ghulam Rahim and Managing Director of the IJM Corporation Dato Krishnan Tan Boon Seng also spoke on the occasion.—APP